

THE PRESENTMENTS OF THE GRAND JURIES

For the County of Middlesex, at their General Sessions: Together, with the Opinions and Orders of the Justices thereupon.

Middlesex ss. *Ad General Sessionem pacis Dom. Regis ten' pro Com' Middl' apud Hick's-Hall in St. Johns-Street, in Com' predict. die Lune scil' Quarto die Decemb'. Anno Regni Regis Carol' Secundi nunc Angl' &c. Tricesimo quarto.*

THIS Court, having received a *Presentment* from the *Grand-Jury*, Returned and Sworn to Serve in this Sessions. *In hac verba,*

Middlesex ss. *To the Right Worshipful, His Majesty's Justices of the Peace of the County of Middlesex, Sitting in Open Sessions at Hick's-Hall in St. Johns-Street, in the said County, on Monday being the Fourth day of December, Annoq; Dom. 1682.*

A Presentment of the Grand Jury for the Body of the said County of Middl'

WE Present, as our Opinion; That *Conventicles* are destructive to the Interest of this Kingdom. They Publish our Divisions to Princes abroad; and consequently, the Weakness of the Kingdom: And will inevitably perpetuate the Unhappy Separation which is amongst Us; which every Good Man must deplore, and every Wise Man ought to use his Endeavours to Reconcile. We esteem it our Duty, in the Station we now are, to make an Essay towards Union, a part of our Service: And therefore humbly pray, This Honourable Court, before this Sessions ends, to Consult, and take some effectual Course, that the *Conventicles* in this County may forthwith be Suppressed; which, We are of Opinion, will be a Ready and Sure Way to Establish the Peace and Prosperity of this Kingdom: Which certainly, every Honest Man desires.

And likewise, having a *Presentment* (Made by the *Grand Jury* of the Hundred of *Offulston*, in *Michaelmas*-Term last past, and by Them delivered to His Majesty's Court of *King's-Bench*) laid before this Court. *In hac verba:*

The Presentment of the Grand Jury for the Hundred of Offulston, in the County of Middlesex.

WE present, as Our Opinion, That the best way to Secure the *Monarchy*, To Preserve the *King's* Person in Safety, and His Majesty's Government in Peace, is the due Execution of the Laws.

That it is the Duty of all *Magistrates* in their several Places, to take care, that the Laws be impartially Executed.

That all Persons, who Associate together with a greater Number than the Law allows, in *Conventicles*, *Clubs*, or *Cabals*, to do Unlawful Acts, and do any such Act, are Riotous Persons, and ought to be Proceeded against, as Riotors.

We present, That all Persons who do not frequent the Church, according to Law, are *Recusants*; it being not possible to know the Hearts of Men, for what Cause they refuse to come to Church; and that all Connivance, or Indulgence in that Case, upon any Pretence, is a ready Way to bring in *Papery*.

We present, That all such Persons, who go from County to County, and Associate in Numbers, to do Unlawful Acts, are to be taken as Vagrants, and Persons very dangerous to the Government.

We present, That those Persons, who Publish *Libellous* Matters against the Government, or False News, ought to be Enquired after, and Punished.

That by the Statute of the 13th. and 14th. of His Majesty that now is, all Persons are to be Disarm'd, whom the *Lord Lieutenant*, or the *Deputy-Lieutenants*, shall judge Dangerous to the Peace of the Kingdom. And we present, That all such Persons, who in Multitudes wilfully, and in Contempt of the Government, break the Laws, are dangerous to the Peace of the Kingdom.

We present, as Our Opinion, That *Papery*, and *Phanaticism*, are equally dangerous to the Government, by Law Established. The *Papists*, ever since the *Reformation*, have Plotted, and Contrived many Designs against this Kingdom; but secretly, not by the Appearance of any open Force; but, by God's Providence, and the Wisdom of the Government, they have been always disappointed. The

Pharmicks made but one Attempt, and with a high Hand Raised a Rebellion, Murdered the Best of Kings, many of the Loyal Nobility and Gentry, Took away their Estates, Laid aside the Monarchy, Destroy'd the Church; and for almost Twenty Years, exercised Arbitrary and Tyrannical Government against Law.

The Extortion of *Bayliffs* was given us in Charge. We are of Opinion, That the best way to prevent such Abuses, is, that no *Bayliffs*, or their *Followers*, may be permitted to keep Taverns, Ale-Houses, or Victualling-Houses.

WE have Received a Paper directed to the Lord Mayor of London, and Court of Aldermen, about the Matter of *Sheriffs*. The Prayer of it is a Menace, in these Words: *Our necessary Desires, in this Particular, which is of so great Importance to the whole Kingdom, and make bold to tell Your Lordship, and this Court, That all the fatal Consequences, which shall happen by your not doing what Justice this Case requires of You, will be laid at your Doors.* We find some Hundreds of Hands set to the said Paper, all Private Persons. What such getting of Hands, or Associating in such Numbers, to intermeddle with the Affairs of another County, may be Interpreted, We cannot tell; or how this Overt Act of delivering the said Menace, which seems to threaten Force, may be understood, We know not; But are of Opinion, If such Seditious Practices cannot be controuled by Law, the Peace of this Kingdom is in much Danger.

All which We humbly submit to the Consideration of this Honourable Court; and pray, if We are not in the Right, to be Directed: It being our desire, That not only Our Selves, but all His Majesty's Subjects may in their several Places and Stations, Act according to Law; and not in an Arbitrary Way, impose upon their Fellow-Subjects.

WE, His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for this County, having seriously considered the said *Presentments*, do not only approve of the same; but Return our Thanks to those Gentlemen, who Served upon the said *Grand Juries*, for their Care of His Majesty's Government, and the Peace of this County, expressed in the Seasonable Advice given in the said *Presentments*: Which Advice of our County's Representatives, We thought it our Duty to Improve, by using Our utmost Diligence and Industry, according to their Advice, to put the Laws in Execution: And in Order thereunto, have Consulted together, and Resolved, That the *High-Constables* of the several Divisions in this County, be required to Return the Number of *Conventicles*, and Unlicensed Schools, within their several Divisions, the Places where they are kept, the Owners of the houses where they are kept, and the Christian and Surnames of the Preachers or Teachers, who usually Officiate there, with the Place of their Abode.

That the Justices of the Peace within their several Divisions, repair in person to the said *Conventicles*, at the usual Times of the People's Assembling there together, and take such Effectual Course and Means to Suppress the said *Conventicles*, with such Assistance as they shall think fit; and that the High Constables, Constables, Headboroughs, and Parish-Officers, be aiding and assisting to the said Justices.

That all Persons who refuse to come to Church, and Receive the Sacrament according to Law, are *Recusants*, and to be Presented by the Constables, that they may be Indicted; and that the Unlicensed School-Masters and School-Mistresses be presented according to Law.

That the Twelve Pence for not coming to Church, enjoined by the Statute, be duly Levied to the Use of the Poor.

That the Justices on Tuesday-Morning, the Twelfth of December instant, attend the Lord Bishop of London, at his House, with the said *Presentments*, and Resolutions of this Court; and to desire his Lordship, that he will be pleased to use all effectual Ways and Means to cause the Names of those Persons, who do not frequent their Parish Church, and Receive the Sacrament, according to Law, to be Returned to his Lordship, and cause them to be Excommunicated; and their Names, with places of Abode, and Additions, to be set up in some open place of the Church or Vestry-House; where His Majesty's good Subjects may resort to inform themselves, who they are; and by that know in all Cases, how to Live, and have Dealings with them, according to Law.

This Court doth order all the Resolutions of the said Justices to be forth-with put in due Execution; and doth hereby enjoin all the Justices, High Constables, Constables, Headboroughs, and other Parish Officers, in their several Divisions, no be diligent therein, as they will Answer the contrary at their perils.

And it is the Opinion of this Court, That such dangerous Persons, as in one of the said *Presentments* are mentioned, ought for the Preservation of the Peace of the Government, to be Disarmed: And that the Lord Lieutenants, and Deputy-Lieutenants of this County, be acquainted therewith, that they may give further Order in it, as they shall think fit.

And it is further Ordered by this Court, That the several Constables of the Divisions, near the City of London, in this County, do leave Warning in writing, with the several Inhabitants, whose Houses front the publick Streets, within their several Divisions; thereby commanding them, that they do every Night (except such Nights that the Moon Ariseth and Shineth before Five of the Clock) during the Winter-season, hang out Lanthorns with Lights, to continue till Nine of the Clock every Evening: And that they, the said Constables, do return to this Court every Sessions, the true Names and Surnames of all that shall refuse the same.

And it is further Ordered, That the several Constables, Headboroughs, and other Officers, in this County, do personally warn all the Inhabitants within their Divisions, carefully to cleanse and sweep, or cause to be cleansed and swept the Chimneys within their Houses, to prevent all manner of Damages, that may happen by the neglect of the same.

And it is lastly Ordered, The several Ale-house-keepers, within this County, do before the next general Renewing of Licenses in this County, which will be in the beginning of March next, Receive the Sacrament, according to Law, and procure Certificates of their so doing, under the High-Constables, in whose Division they inhabit: And that the Justices of the Peace, in their several Divisions, do forbear to License, or Allow any Person to keep any publick Ale-house, that shall refuse so to do. And if that such Person or Persons shall Receive the Sacrament for that Turn only, and shall afterwards frequent *Conventicles*, and not constantly come to Church; that such Person or Persons be (upon Complaint made) forth-with Suppressed.

Per Cur.

ADDERLET.

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